



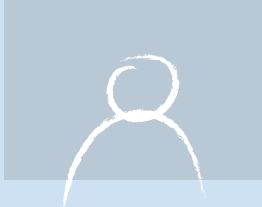
Provincia di
Trapani

Alcamo



Welcome





Alcamo is...

Known as City of wine and of art, it was the birthplace of the poet Ciullo, and is one of the most famous urban centres of the province. Walking through the historic centre one can admire the Conti di Modica castle, the noble historic buildings, the churches, rich in works of art (sculptures by Gagini, stuccoes by

Serpotta, paintings by Borremans). From Mount Bonifato, from the Alcamo Wood Reserve and from the ruins of Ventimiglia castle, it is possible to admire enchanting views, the splendid scenery of the Gulf of Castellammare and the golden beaches of Alcamo Marina. The cultivation of the

“*purceddu*” winter melon and, above all, the wine production, which has made the city one of the most appreciated wine making areas of Italy make Alcamo an important stopping place in the province and is also to be remembered for the age-old extraction and working of Travertine marble.

Urban Landscape



San Tommaso Church, doorway



Ventimiglia Castle





History

The territory was covered by the Elymians, the Romans and the Byzantines, for its strategic position on the western access roads to Palermo. With the Arabs it was given the name *Alqamah*. The first inhabited area was built around the castle (XIV century), and today it has a regular chessboard street layout

along the axis of corso VI Aprile: this date recalls the glorious day in 1860 when it was in the front line during the liberation of the island proclaiming an anti-Bourbon temporary government and opening its doors to Garibaldi. The city boasts a number of important historic inhabitants including: the poet Ciullo d'Alcamo

(XIII century), author of the famous dialogue poem "*Rosa fresca aulentissima*" which is one of the most antique documents of Italian literature; Sebastiano Bagolino, a XVI century poet and painter; Agostino Pantò, born in 1675, founder of the *Accademia del Buon Gusto*; Giuseppe Renda a XVIII century painter.

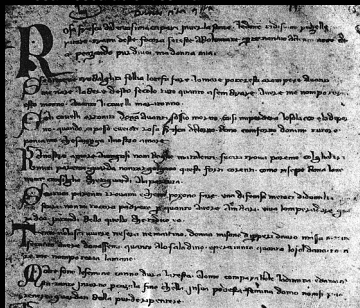
Arab Fountain



Conti di Modica Castle



Rosa fresca aulentissima





Landscape

Its position at 276 metres above sea level - on the slopes of Mount Bonifato, considered to be the roof of western Sicily, reflects the town in the blue Tyrrhenian sea and makes it an exclusive balcony over the gulf of Castellammare from where ones eyes, looking from Punta Raisi to the headland of Capo San Vito, can enjoy

spectacular views, suspended between sea and sky. From the summit of Mount Bonifato, the view encompasses the ample territory characterized by the fertile valleys of the Jato river (to the east) and the Freddo river (to the west). The beautiful Bagolino square a so called *Belvedere* has a spectacular view of the

Gulf of Castellammare and of the rolling countryside characterised by the geometry of the vineyards, lines of olive trees and the presence of the fortified structures of the *Bagli*. The view from the Calatubo castle over the gulf, and the hinterland leading up to Mount Bonifato is also breathtaking.

Urban Landscape



View from Mount Bonifato



View from Mount Bonifato





Nature

On the summit of Mount Bonifato, there is a green area of particular interest, both for the development and balance reached by the arboreal vegetation, and for its recreational and cultural functions: the *Riserva Naturale Orientata Bosco d'Alcamo* - Oriented Nature Reserve Alcamo Wood, managed by the Provincia

Regionale di Trapani. The slopes have been colonised by *ampelodesma*, more commonly known as *ddisa*, which forms extended meadows together with *euphorbia dendroid*, the dwarf palm, smoke-bush, broom and *ferula*. The thick wood, made up mostly by conifers is a habitat for a large community of animals.

The ex-hotel *La Funtanazza* is home to the CELT, a centre of environmental education created by the Provincia Regionale di Trapani in partnership with boards and associations including the LIPU, which has made a bird watching hut and developed a school awareness campaign about the birdlife.

RNO Alcamo Wood

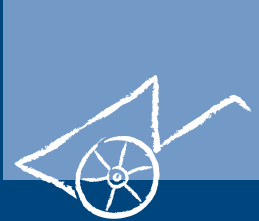


Fillirea latifolia



Quercus ilex





Traditions

Popular literature, with its references to local happenings, narrations of magic spells, and poetry in dialect, both serious and humoristic, is of particular importance in Alcamo. The use of riddles, sayings and numerous proverbs with unfailing references to wine and gastronomy is

remarkable: *ad Arcamu, nta'austu li macaseni aspettanu lu mustu* (In Alcamo, in August, the warehouses expect the grape must); *biancu d'Arcamu e Cerasolu di Vittoria* (White wine of Alcamo and Cerasuolo of Vittoria); *Tri sunnu li bboni muccuna: ficu, persichi e*

miluna (There are three good bites to eat: figs, peaches and water melon); *Vinu vecchiu e ogghiu novu* (Old wine and new oil); *Ovu di un'ura, pani di un jìornu, vinu di un'annu nun ficiru mai dannu* (Fresh, hour-old eggs, day-old bread and year old wine have never done any damage).

Olive Production



Ancient olive-press



Altar of Saint Joseph





Religion Remembrance Bonds

On the 19th, 20th and 21st of June, dedicated to the celebration of *Madonna dei Miracoli*, patron saint of Alcamo there is an unrepeatable occasion when Alcamo's popular religion also becomes a great cultural and social moment with various events accompanying rites, celebrations and the well attended procession with the Simulacrum of the

Madonna carried on the shoulder; exhibitions of flag throwers, bands, concerts, theatre and musical representations, historic parades, the ceremony of the *Vesperi Solenni* - Solum Vespers with the incredible illumination of the town centre, fireworks, the characteristic showmen's booths and seed sellers, these are just some of the

sacred and profane aspects of this extraordinary celebration which involves not only the people of Alcamo but also the inhabitants of nearby villages and tourists. Pilgrimages to the sanctuary and votive altars with flower arrangements along the city streets precede the celebration during the month of May.

Madonna dei Miracoli



Madonna dei Miracoli Procession



Sanctuary





Art

The churches are real treasure chests of art, the most important being the Mother Church which has frescoes by the Flemish Guglielmo Borremans on the vault of the main nave, the splendid marble triptych of *Madonna tra gli Apostoli Filippo e Giacomo* - Madonna between Apostles Philip and James, (1519), the relief with the *Transito della Vergine* - The

Passing of Blessed Mary (1529) and the *Crocifisso* - Crucifix (1523) all by Antonello Gagini; and the *San Pietro* (1586) by Giacomo Gagini. In San Francesco d'Assisi Church there are also works attributed to Antonello and Giacomo Gagini. A masterpiece by Antonello is the statue of *Sant'Oliva* (1511) in the Church of the same name where the

Annunciazione - Annunciation by Antonino and Giacomo Gagini (1545) and the splendid canvas of the *Anime del Purgatorio* - the Souls in purgatory di Pietro Novelli (1639) can also be found. The stucco statues, masterfully shaped by Giacomo Serpotta for the churches of Santi Cosma and Damiano (1722) and of San Francesco di Paola (1724) are magnificent.

Mother Church, frescoes, Borremans



Mother Church, triptych, A. Gagini



Mother Church, triptych, A. Gagini





Archaeology

The summit of Mount Bonifato is an interesting archaeological site which has brought structures and ceramic findings to the surface dating back to at least four phases from the proto-historic to the medieval ages. The first, dating back to between the IX and the V century B.C., is documented by engraved, stamped and

painted ceramics. A sporadic frequentation in late-ancient times, was followed by a phase between the end of the XI century - beginning of the XII century and the first half of the XIII century, indicated by Sicilian-Norman and proto majolica ceramics. Along the western side of the mountain, in the districts of Funtanazza and Mazzone

there is the remains of a necropolis with about 50 small artificial cavern tombs in front of which is a *dromos* and sometimes a quadrangular atrium in front of the underground cell. The site in the Foggia district, at the mouth of the river San Bartolomeo where Roman kilns have been discovered is also interesting.

Fragment of Jug, X-XI century A.D.



Black glazed *Skiphos*



RNO Mount Bonifato, *Funtanazza*





Monuments

The urban centre, characterised by suggestive cobbled streets, holds some splendid churches, sumptuous buildings and a fourteenth century castle, the castle of the Conti di Modica (Counts of Modica) which dominates the town with its robust mass. The San Tommaso church (first half of the XV century) is a small

Gothic-Catalan beauty, with its splendid doorway, while the austere De Ballis tower (XV century) is decorated with an elegant entablature. The Mother Church asserts itself with its impressive basilica plan type given to it by Angelo Italia and Giuseppe Diamante (XVII century). Fulcrum of Baroque architecture, other than the

church of Santi Cosma e Damiano, thought to be one of the most beautiful in Sicily, are the churches of Santi Paolo e Bartolomeo, Sant'Oliva and the church of the Collegio dei Gesuiti. Outside the town centre, the ruins of two castles rise: Calatubo (XI century), and Ventimiglia on Mount Bonifato (XIV century).

Conti di Modica Castle



Mother Church



De Ballis Tower





Museums Science Education

Alcamo has three libraries: the council library dedicated to Sebastiano Bagolino, with a patrimony of 68,000 volumes, including those of the *Fondi speciali*, coming from ex monasteries and convents, and *Storia del territorio alcamese* - History of the territory of Alcamo section; The Salesiani Library and

the Multimedia library San Giacomo de Spada. The *Castello dei Conti di Modica* is home to an interesting museum centre and cultural activities; it hosts a large documentation on the production of wine and the local culture, works of art, temporary exhibitions (photography, bottles etc) and tasting of wine and

gastronomic products. In the demoethnoanthropological section, tools, objects, utensils and costumes of the territory are exhibited. The *Museo alcamese di arte sacra* - Alcamo museum of sacred arts, situated in the Mother Church, is also interesting and holds paintings, silverwork, and sacred vestments.

Bagolino library



Museum Centre



Puppet Theatre





Typical produce

The activity of extraction and manufacturing of travertine, which makes up the entire ground on which the town is built, is significant. The deposits extend from the northern part of Mount Bonifato, to Cappuccini district. Structured like bee hives, going from ivory to hazelnut in colour, it became

known after 1925, when, smoothed and polished, it was presented in national exhibitions. The "maestri" who have worked the marble for centuries, in more recent times have given life to extraordinary works of art and have contributed to the restoration of the Great Wall of China. Another type

of marble is the red marble which was used in the past in Alcamo and in other cities including Palermo where it covers the main steps of the royal palace. The productive activity of the city is sustained by craft companies specialise in the working of wood and beaten iron, embroidery and ceramics.

Working of Travertine marble



Working of beaten iron





Wine and food

Alcamo is one of the main centres in Sicily for the production of wine. In 1972, Bianco d'Alcamo was recognised as a D.O.C. wine, a label which has recently been extended to red wines, rosés and sparkling wines. The Bianco d'Alcamo is light straw yellow in colour with green

hues, it has a dry fresh taste with a fruity bouquet, a delicate smell and an alcoholic grade between 11.5° and 13.5°. The town also boasts the production of a fine extra virgin olive oil and the *purceddu* melon which is a variety with green skin and oval in shape which keeps for a long time.

There is also a vast production of pastries and cakes including *minni di virgini*, which are pastries in the shape of breasts filled with a type of milk cream called *biancomangiare*; in the old nuns' recipes for these pastries, the cooking time was often indicated in Credo or Ave.

Bianco d'Alcamo D.O.C.



Purceddu Melon



Minni di virgini





Shows and events

Alcamo Estate has a calendar rich in appointments; concerts, plays, films, exhibitions, games, musical cultural and sporting events. During the month of July and August, *Summer Time Blues Festival*, a music event which attracts artists of international fame, takes place. On the 10th of August, *Calici di Stelle* - Chalice of Stars is an evening dedicated

to typical products and wine tasting. A national festival of artists takes place at the end of the summer with meetings and open laboratories. *Natale ad Alcamo* - Christmas in Alcamo includes events and performances during the Christmas period. At the Cielo D'Alcamo theatre, the *Rassegna della Prosa e dello Spettacolo* - Prose and Entertainment review and

the *Concorso internazionale cantanti lirici* - National opera singers competition are held; at the Marconi centre there are classical music concerts, conferences, exhibitions, poetry competitions. Coinciding with the celebrations in honour of the Madonna dei Miracoli, the *Festival degli artisti di strada* - Street artists' festival is held.

Summer Time Blues Festival



Calici di Stelle



Madonna dei Miracoli festivities





Entertainment, sport and free time

The town has many meeting places, a theatre and a congress centre with an exhibition room. Sport can be practised in one of the many gyms, in a sports centre with gym, swimming pool, well - being zone and physiotherapy department, and in an entertainment centre with swimming pool,

ice rink and a playground. A horse riding centre with obstacle course, stables and riding school offers tourism on horseback in the countryside of Alcamo, trekking and excursions of this kind. On Wednesdays in Alcamo there is a lively weekly market with merchandize of all types from

agri- foodstuffs to clothes to utensils and household products. At Alcamo Marina various aquatic sports can be practiced; in summer the beach, which is some kilometres long, is appreciated by bathers because of its fine, golden sands and the enchanting blue sea.

Indoor sports arena



Alcamo Marina, beach



Thermal springs





UNIONE EUROPEA
F.E.S.R.



REGIONE SICILIANA
Assessorato BB.CC.AA. e P.I.



Provincia Regionale
di Trapani



Sponsor welcome!

POR SICILIA 2000-2006. Mis. 2.02 d
PIT 6 Alcesti. Int. 28/3 codice
1999.IT.16.I.PO.01 I/2.02/9.03.13/0058

*Foto Archivio Provincia Regionale di Trapani; eccetto 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 7 - 10
13 - 14 - 15 - 16 - 18 - 21 - 27 - 29 - 30 - 31 - 34 - 37 - 39 - 40 (VAdriano)*

You are here:



European Tourist and Cultural routes
La Via del Sale e il Patrimonio della
Italia - Trapani Sicilia Occidentale



REALIZZATO SECONDO
GLI STANDARD CISTE